

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 01298 241553Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-01 ICA-11 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05
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R 241530Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6635
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
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AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GEORGETOWN 1298

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, GY
SUBJECT: GAWU-TUC SPLIT OVER MAY DAY PLANS

1. AS MAY DAY, GUYANA'S TRADITIONAL LABOR HOLIDAY APPROACHES, THE POLITICAL DIVISIONS IN THE GUYANA TRADES UNION CONGRESS (TUC) ARE BECOMING MORE EVIDENT. IN A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE TUC, WHICH IS BASICALLY PRO-GOG, ON APRIL 19, THE GUYANA AGRICULTURAL AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION (GAWU), AFFILIATED WITH THE OPPOSITION PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP), ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD SPONSOR MAY DAY RALLIES ON OUTLYING SUGAR ESTATES UNDER ITS OWN AUSPICES RATHER THAN THE TUC'S. THE MAY DAY PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE TUC HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO PERSUADE GAWU TO RELINQUISH SPONSORSHIP OF THE SUGAR ESTATE RALLIES IN ORDER TO FOSTER "A UNITED LABOR FRONT."

2. THE MAIN FESTIVITIES FOR MAY DAY WILL TAKE PLACE IN GEORGETOWN AT THE NATIONAL PARK. IN THE ABSENCE OF PM BURNHAM, WHO IS ABROAD ON A TRIP INCLUDING THE USSR,
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NORTH KOREA, GDR, AND LONDON AND IS NOT EXPECTED BACK UNTIL MAY 5, ACTING PRIME MINISTER DR. PTOLEMY REID WILL GIVE THE MAIN ADDRESS. THE TUC IS ALSO ORGANIZING A RALLY IN THE BAUXITE TOWN OF LINDEN IN COLLABORATION WITH TWO OF ITS AFFILIATES, THE GUYANA MINE WORKERS UNION (GMWU) AND THE GUYANA BAUXITE SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION (GBSA). THE TUC IS EAGER TO SEE THE SAME ARRANGEMENT

ON THE POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME SUGAR ESTATES WHERE THE
OPPOSITION HAS TRADITIONALLY DRAWN ITS STRENGTH. BUT
GAWU HAS SPONSORED ITS OWN RALLIES ON THE ESTATES IN THE
PAST AND IS JEALOUSLY GUARDING ITS INDEPENDENCE.

3. MEETINGS TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE ARE CONTINUING,
BUT GIVEN THE POLITICAL DISTANCE BETWEEN THE MAJOR ACTORS,
REACHING A SETTLEMENT WILL BE A DIFFICULT TASK.

4. COMMENT: MAY DAY MANIFESTATIONS WILL BE CLOSELY OBSERVED
THIS YEAR AS AN INDICATION OF POLITICAL REACTION TO THE
FORTHCOMING NATIONAL REFERENDUM WHICH, IF APPROVED, WILL
GIVE THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS-DOMINATED NATIONAL AS-
SEMBLY LED BY PM BURNHAM A FREE HAND IN RE-WRITING THE
CONSTITUTION.
BURKE

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